

The Waves of Feminism

A PPT by B.A. Luis Salazar Castro

- Feminism began as a more moralistic movement rather than a political one (although it quickly became such)
- It sought to obtain rights for women (they could not have property, vote, nor lead businesses)
- It did not turn radical until the 1960s when the second wave was consolidated
- The Woman's Liberation Movement was the most solid group of feminism in this stage (p. 32 lists works and authors of the time)

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- Pp. 34-36 detail important Feminist works and the women writers who penned them

The Foundations of Feminism

- Basic premise: we live in a patriarchy
- Toril Moi:
- Separates sex (physical) from gender (culturally constructed)
- Argues against biological essentialisms, i.e. that because we are men or women, we already have predisposed behaviors to follow





- She came to CR in 2010 and here she was with yours truly and a couple of my classmates

- Anne Finch echoes Moi in the essentialist war by rejecting the natural notion of gender and believes we express gender ideas because we were conditioned (taught) to manifest them.
- Also, men were considered to have power over nature, but women were meant to only follow it and be subjected to it and to male power (evidenced in Hawthorne's "The Birthmark")
- The movement also sought for a revision of women's texts (Adrienne Rich) and for an understanding of how language affects gender (Robin Lackoff) (pp. 42-43)

- Revision means to go back and re-analyze texts taking the role of women as important instead of taking the patriarchal-centered analyses of the past
- Judith Fetterly published *The Resisting Reader: A Feminist Approach to American Fiction* (1978) which advocated for women to recognize how male domination of literary criticism made female characters and writers seem less powerful and less important
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- Showalter explains that women must remember they are part of patriarchy but that they must be agents against it (a double agent/subject)
- For more on Showalter's theories, see the slideshow posted on the wiki